589x daughter or ward in marriage without reference to her wishes, money paid for a slave wife," and p. 314, sɔ̄ngya: the same) therefore does not correspond to the sense in which these terms are used by the Nkundɔ́ tribes under discussion.

Another term for this payment is tsinola bonto (ilengɛ́). I know of no other use of the verb tsinola.

An expression which brings out the idea of its being a last [192] payment is kumbola bonto (ilengɛ́). The verb kumbola means to strike the last blow in felling a tree. (1)

1. Note that kumbola also means "to take in marriage."

Formerly, the payment of a real slave, that is, of a human [561] being, was absolutely obligatory. Nowadays, since slavery has been [435] abolished, the worth of a slave in bakonga has been substituted; it consists of 25 rings, or of 15 to 20 if they are especially beautiful. (2)

2. In the past, the price of a slave was from 10 to 15 rings.

To distinguish between these forms of the bosɔ̄ngo, the Nkundɔ́ say bont'ɔ̌w'abwɔ́ (ilengɛ́ y'ā̌bwɔ́), "a slave with hair," therefore a human being, or bont'ɔ̌w'akonga (ilengɛ́ y'ā̌konga), "slave in copper rings."

583x Batswá, instead of slaves, could be given as bosɔ̄ngo. They 563 were not reduced to slavery, however, but remained in the same position as before, except that they changed masters.

Sometimes a master who wanted to be rid of an incorrigible Botswá gave him away as a real slave in a bosɔ́ngo; in that case it was as if a slave in the strict sense of the word had been given.

In other instances the master acted with the more or less explicit consent of the Botswá. Those who were thus handed over as a bride-price payment were usually women. [159] Since in matrimonial matters of the Batswá, the Bootɔ́ master fulfills the role of "Father," he is entitled to the girls' bride price and has the duty of

583x 563 obtaining wives for the boys. Therefore he can turn a Botswá girl belonging to him over to his father-in-law. The father-in-law never takes this woman as his wife or as a wife for one of his relatives; but he gives her in marriage to one of his own Batswá or to a stranger of that race who pays him a bride price for her. Socially and financially the result is exactly the same as if the son-in-law had made his payment in the form of a slave.

Thus the bride price paid by Lokonda jw'ísano y'ánkanja of Ngombe (Bongíli) for Bakutu of the Baséká Elongama (Besombó, Bombwanja) and used by the latter's cousin, Bofénda of Ekúkola (Bongíli) to obtain for wife, Iloa of Ndongó (Bongíli), consisted of 60 rings and the woman Ómâmenga (Antonia) of the Mbálanga clan of Botswá. Ómâmenga was later married to Wanja (Pius), a Botswá belonging to her new masters.

● [567] There may be two or more slaves, for the same reasons that determine the size of the walo. The Bombwanja are only exceptionally satisfied with a single one. But all the slaves always comprise a single bosóngo.

583x The bosóngo is not part of the jéngí. The natives say bosóngo émí ík'omóngó, "the bosóngo is entirely separate." Their statements on this subject are markedly categorical.

A characteristic expression which designates the entire bride price is bámbá la bonto, "rings and a man" (slave). The rings are the jéngí; they are valuables of a purely material nature. The bosóngo is, on the contrary, a human being.

There is no term in Lonkundo which covers both kinds of payments. The whole cannot be expressed precisely in a single word.

583x 178 In the vicinity of Flandria, however, the young people [160] are beginning to confuse the two words jéngí and bosóngo and to use one in place of the other. (1) [Editor's note: The confusion today is

1. The young people from Injólo who are about twenty years of age and whom I have known at Flandria Mission and in their own settlements, do not confuse these terms but distinguish clearly between them.

583 The bosɔ́ngo must be handed over under any circumstances, even if divorce or death precede it. If a husband refuses to pay he loses his rights over one of the daughters in his wife's family, whose bride price would compensate with interest for the economic and social loss suffered by the woman's clan. (1)

1. See Chapter VIII, Article IV, and Chapter IX, Article IX, 2.

2. The value and consequences of the bosɔ́ngo

How important is the bosɔ́ngo today? In answering this question a distinction must be made between two aspects of the problem: the financial aspect and the legal aspect.

1) Financially, the bosɔ́ngo, first of all, completes the payment of the bride price and thus produces the highest degree of theoretical stability possible in a Nkundɔ́ marriage. That is the meaning of the following expressions: bɔ́lɔ́ wǎ liála ńk'onto, "the strength of the marriage (its stability) is to be found in the slave,"; l'osɔ́ngo bɔ́mo to ákɔ́longwa wǎlí, "by means of the bosɔ́ngo the woman completely becomes the wife"; or wǎlí ákɔ́longwa ɔ́kɛ́, "the wife becomes completely yours." Since, as I have explained, the bosɔ́ngo terminates the payment of the bride price [162], the woman's parents no longer have any excuse for taking her away from her husband, and they become even more desirous of maintaining this union in which such great interests are at stake.

585 178 ●567 Apart from the value of wealth per se, there is also its social influence. In this respect we must make a distinction between the past and the present:

a) At the time when the bosɔ́ngo was necessarily a flesh and blood slave rather than a slave in rings, it was naturally valued more than the walo. Twenty-five bakonga (for the walo) and two slaves were preferable to 50 bakonga and one slave even though, if the payments were reduced to the monetary unit in copper, the latter was greater. This fact is easily explained. "In the past," say the old people, "we had very little copper, and the smelting of iron was a

583x 567 178 hard and lengthy task. The walo paid for our mothers was greatly inferior to what we see nowadays. In the majority of cases our fathers paid no more than 15 or 20 rings and iron objects. But they gave a greater number of slaves. It was not unusual to hand over five or even ten slaves for a wife. Consequently, the bosɔ̂ngo was a good deal more important than the walo. At the present time the white men have introduced a great deal of copper and brass; and the abundance of these metals is the cause of the increase in the price of the walo. On the other hand, it has become more difficult, and finally altogether impossible, to obtain slaves; that is why the bosɔ̂ngo has been lowered. Finally, we have had to substitute rings for persons."

583x 178 b) Nowadays, though the idea of the importance of the bosɔ̂ngo to the family is still alive, because it is the last payment and therefore a permanent settlement of the financial question, its monetary importance and therefore, in a certain perspective, its social importance for the receiving clan, has greatly diminished. This has happened because [163], like the payments that precede it, it has become a payment of copper rings. In places where the bride price is paid in money and in valuables introduced by the Europeans, the importance of the bosɔ̂ngo quite naturally decreases even more rapidly.

583x 2) From the legal standpoint the question is entirely different. The bosɔ̂ngo results in no new relationship between the spouses. The woman's name does not change; she is called wáli, as before. The idea that she becomes a wife completely at this time is based, as we have said, only on the fact that the marriage theoretically becomes completely stable. This supposed stability is derived from the handing over of the last payment, which leaves the parents no excuse for taking their daughter away from her husband. It does not come from any new legal act.

That this is so is clearly demonstrated in the following fact: if the woman dies before the bosɔ̂ngo, there is no palaver, as there is if she dies before the walo is paid. Her husband is not required to pay an indemnity (mbálaka). But he is required to complete the

P
178 doctor who was in charge of the dispensary at Flandria at that time
588 informed me of the case of a Botswa fruit harvester in the service of
563 the H.C.B. who had syphilis of unquestionably sexual origin.
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Though a racial difference constitutes an obstacle to marriage,
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582 a tribal or ethnic one does not. Where the geographic situation permits, true Nkundó, such as the Elinga, marry members of neighboring groups such as the Ngombe, the Mbole, or the Ekonda.

Article II. Social Status

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554 Among the Nkundó a difference in social status is not an
582 obstacle to marriage. They have no social classes strictly speaking.
[565] They differentiate between those with authority, those who are in-
[571] feriors, and the individuals or families who are not entitled to their word in political matters; but these ideas do not come into play in ordinary social relations, [245] and especially not with respect to marriage. A person may belong to a clan which is inferior, subject, dependent, foreign, or descended from a slave; nevertheless he may marry even a member of the group's senior clan. These distinctions are in the realm of politics; a marriage is a matter of law, affection, and good relations based on the payment of a bride price.

M
● 567 Actual slaves are an exception, but here a distinction must
582 be made between the sexes. Unions with slave women were very common, but they were not marriages strictly speaking. Before a real marriage was entered into, the woman was set free. More details on this subject will be given in Chapter VII, Article V. For men the situation is altogether different. The condition of a slave was not only inferior, it was dishonorable, though a bit less so than among the Ancients. It might be overlooked if the love between the pair was unusually ardent, and there are a few clans descended from a "free" woman and a slave man, who were united in a proper and legitimate marriage for which the master paid the bride price.

There is no longer any opposition to the union of a "free" person with the descendant of a mixed marriage. The children may always claim kinship with their maternal ancestors who in these

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567 matters are more important than the father's ancestry. (1)

[554]

1. Among the Nkundó no shame is attached to not knowing the family of one's father. But not to be able to name the mother's clan is a great dishonor for it proves that she was a slave.

There is less opposition to the first generation born of a couple who were both slaves than for their parents, and it progressively decreases with each succeeding generation. There is practically no opposition now to the grandsons. The reason seems to be
[597] that although receiving a wife from one's master in a regular marriage does not constitute emancipation (nsikó, nsikola) for the slave, it is a kind of adoption (wɛ́mya, -ɛ́mya). [246]

Article III. Kinship

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835 Marriage between members of the same kin group (isangano, bosangema, from the verb -sangema, "to be related") is forbidden. But how far does such a kin group extend? It is impossible to give a general rule. On the one hand, it is certain that if two groups are not descended from a common ancestor there is no bond of kinship between them, even if they live side by side. But on the other hand, it is not possible to say that all those who are descended from the same ancestor are relatives and that marriage is forbidden between the various branches of the grouping they comprise. The question therefore amounts to knowing by which ancestor the exogamous grouping is defined. A decision on this point may only be made through the examination of each case individually.

6/4 It is impossible to deduce anything from the meaning of the term clan, for it is usually defined as "a grouping of families united to one another by kinship." This leaves us back where we started. The characteristics usually given for a clan are: generic name,

595x 554 that no one will see her. She lives in this house in the company of her ebísa, her daughters, some female relatives, or even another of her husband's wives, who must wait on her, prepare food for her, etc., and who go out and enter freely. Her husband also enters at will and spends the usual number of nights with her. No other man is permitted to enter the enclosure.

During her period of seclusion, the bolúmbú may not do the slightest work. She does not wash with water, but only with palm oil. She walks only on mats. She is also exempt from mourning for her parents. (Compare with Chapter I, Part 1, Article II.)

When the period of seclusion comes to an end, the husband announces the coming-out feast. There is merrymaking, dancing, and drinking. Mats are spread from the door of [351] the hut of seclusion all the way to the middle of the street. The two men who brought the woman to the hut come again and, taking her by the arms at the entrance to the enclosure, lead her over the mats. The ceremony thus ends without further ado.

The bolúmbú is henceforth free and acts like any other woman except for the wearing of furs. She may work, draw water, cook, travel, visit her parents, etc. But her husband's [563] honor and his reputation as a rich man require that he give his [567] bolúmbú one or several slaves, or Batswa, or -- as is more frequently done -- one or two bibísa, who are supposed to take [357] care of her housework and thus free the princess.

595x 554 837 614 Adultery with her -- after her seclusion -- is more severely punished than misconduct with an ordinary woman as regards the indemnity to be paid. But as a flagrant insult, it is considered very serious indeed, not so much as an infringement or marital rights as an attack on the honor of the whole clan or group of clans involved. Thus, while adultery with a nkóndé, for instance, is a private matter, arousing the husband's jealousy and anger, misconduct with a bolúmbú is a public offense. The whole clan is enraged -- for they believe that their honor has been attacked, and all the members together press for vengeance for

595x from her personally; she attaches herself to her relative and follows her in her marital union."

The name ebísa, as well as the functions involved, may be improperly extended to a relative who is fetched by a woman so that she may become the wife not of her husband, but of one of his relatives. Sometimes she is even intended for a man who belongs to another clan, which is related by marriage, but for whom there is prohibition on marriage with the first clan. For instance, Bolúmbú w'ófuwa of Eleke (Lokongo) came to fetch her sister Eengé for Bompata w'iselema, who belonged to the Befósola clan which, like her husband's clan (Bombénga), was part of the village of Besombó.

Article V. Slave Women

595x
557 In times past a polygamist could have one or several slaves in his harem whom he treated as wives. They were war prisoners whom he himself had captured, or had bought from others, or received as [356] bosóngo. As a rule no bride price was paid for them, and in leaving, they retained their status of slaves. This fact did not prevent a husband from loving them like real wives. But their rivals respected them less and, especially on the occasion of quarrels and disputes, reminded them of their inferiority.

[177] Since slavery has been abolished by colonization, many former slaves have returned to their respective families. Others, on the contrary, have not wanted to take advantage of the freedom granted them and have preferred to remain faithful. In such cases the husband paid the usual bride price for them with all the appropriate formalities. Only recently (1932) Ifolí, a [583] Belondó man (Bonjoku) thus paid a bride price of 63 bakonga to his wife Ámbá's family. Ámbá was originally from Bokukú (Bofngí) but had been abducted at the beginning of the European occupation. Ifolí had inherited her from Bakónongo of the Basékú Mbangó (Bonkoso) thanks to the intervention of his great-uncle Mpetsí who had paid 7 rings on his behalf as the customary bompángá called nsáxsangó.

A slave woman may be chosen as a favorite. Since this choice is a matter of preference, there is no reason why not. This is not true of the rank of bolɔ́mbɔ́, which can never be attained by a slave, as an examination of this eminent position clearly shows. The following slave women are cited among those who were made nkɔ́ndɛ́ by their husbands: Bolɔ́ngɛ by Bakengɔ́ ba Lokolí of Nsɛkɛ́; Bokɛ́tu by Ekányaka ɛy'ondɔ́kɔ́ of Etɔ́ontálɛ́; Ntsimbo by Bombengɛ́lá of Etɔ́ontálɛ́.

When a polygamist felt a very special love for a slave, and had the means to do so, he would enfranchise her and then pay a regular bride price for her. In order for this to happen the woman's family had to intervene, either on its own initiative or by invitation of the husband. Once the ransom was paid, the woman was free. She returned home, and her husband followed her to pay the bride price; thus she became a regular wife on the same basis [357] as any other woman. The procedure was the same whether the slave had been captured personally by the husband or had been bought or acquired as part of a bride price or by some other means.

Such was the case of Bolɔ́mbɔ́, daughter of Boɛ́kwá of Boɛ́ndɛ́ (Bombwanja), who was taken by Esalɛ́ of Ekɔ́kola and bought by Efoloko of Lofelí. She was enfranchised at her father's initiative, and he subsequently married her off in a regular fashion. Another case was that of Etáka, daughter of Elongama ɛa Longɔ́mbá of Besombɔ́, who was married to Bonyongela of Bowɛ́lɛ́. During a war she was taken prisoner by Betɔ́kɔ́ of Ekɔ́kola, who wanted to marry her properly and therefore contacted Elongama. The latter arranged the matter of the ransom and took his daughter with him. Then Betɔ́kɔ́ went to Besombɔ́ to pay the bride price. (1)

[357]

1. Almost all slave women were reduced to their condition, directly or indirectly, because of a war. If they were already married, their marriages were considered as dissolved. Under the circumstances it

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could not be otherwise. In such matters each group took care only of its own interests; and none of the procedures usually accompanying the dissolution of a marriage were observed. However, the husband was entitled to an indemnity, in the form of persons or valuables, from the member of his clan who had fomented the war and was held responsible for all its consequences, whatever the way in which he had provoked it. If necessary, this member could be forced to pay. If he did not have the means to pay indemnities, he himself was reduced to slavery, if the influence of the families involved did not prevent this occurrence. When the woman was enfranchised and a new bride price was paid for her, her family was expected to reimburse her former husband.

[672]

Since, at present, slavery has been abolished, ransom can no longer be paid. A master who wishes to enfranchise a slave woman who has remained faithful to him, simply gives her family the bride price and then goes with his wife to her home to receive the dowry.

Article VI. Life in a Harem

595* Wives of the same husband address each other among themselves as bakalé (sing. bokalé). Their husband calls them all baálí, [358] "wives." All except for true slaves are married by means of a bride price. A woman's sons call their mother's bakalé baálí, "wives," but out of respect toward the older ones

595x 554 In little domestic quarrels, the bomátsa's children like to take advantage of the top rank occupied by their mother. Later, they will have the right to priority, before their brothers, in matters of inheritance and family authority.

595x 567 578 The children of slave women are loved by their father in the same way as their brothers and sisters. However, they are often the object of manifestations of contempt and humiliation on the part of others, especially verbal ones, but only when disputes arise. In particular, they have to submit to the insult of having it said [369] that they are without bonyangó, "a maternal clan." This is one of the most serious insults that can be inflicted by a Nkundó. Nevertheless, their father protects them as much as he can.

[428] The child of a slave woman has no right to an inheritance. Clearly, he lacks for nothing. But he has no political rights, even if he is his father's first-born.

595x 567 The posterity of a slave are not considered as such in matrimonial matters, as we have pointed out in Chapter V, Article II. If the groups descended from free women are extinct, the rights of the clan are inherited by the posterity of a slave, to the exclusion of related clans whose ancestors were entirely free.

595x What is the effect of the system of polygamy on the birth rate? There has been much debate on this question for it is very difficult to answer. Complete statistics well compiled from detailed methodical lists would be necessary. For it is a fact that in many monogamous households the woman is the former wife of a polygamist and for that reason can no longer be counted as a monogamist's wife. In addition it would be necessary to exclude from monogamous households those women who did not marry until an advanced age, after having lived freely for a fairly long time, for example in the centers.

In my opinion the birth rate is endangered above all by the need for individual love and the difference in the ages of the spouses, which is inseparable from the system of polygamy as it now exists. The polygamist's wife instinctively seeks another

586[a] and this was generally the case -- he did not kill him personally
682 but assigned the task to someone else -- his son, his younger
[563] brother, or nephew, etc. Preferably, he hired a Botswá. The price
for this service was 20 copper rings, the sum of the bride price paid
[612] for a Botswá woman. Nkundó law places the entire responsibility
for an assassination and all its consequences upon the person who
orders it performed. Certain of the Batswa specialized in this field.
Among them (of those dependent on the Bombwanja) were Esenge
of Bokengé, Mbólókó of Bombembe, Wai w'ítúmola of Bakoyó;
Lúwá jw'ítómbengándá (died in 1933) also of Bakoyó; Botómba wá
Lokio and Mpótó éy'Ilókó of Mbanja (still alive).

The scorned husband had still other means of taking revenge
586[a] or obtaining indemnification. He made use of them only if the
occasion was favorable or if he was not in a position [382] to go
into expensive adventures such as a war or an assassination. They
were the following:

3) Ikákelo: (1) A relative of his who was married into the

1. See Chapter III, Article VI.

unfaithful wife's clan could be prevented from returning to her husband.

4) The seizure of one of the wives of his recalcitrant father-in-law, or of one of the latter's relatives. This action is called by the generic term lowáála, which signifies "compensation." (2)

2. The woman who was seized was called nginda and her descendants, if there were any, were known as bonginda.

The prisoner was usually put in an etáka (a wooden fork fastened to the neck) (3) to prevent her flight and hasten the reimbursement of

3. See Chapter VI, Article VII, 4, A, b), (1).

● [567] the bride price. If the matter was not settled she became a slave.

586* make it possible for him to recover his claim, he had recourse to the second means:

586* b) Reducing his wife to slavery (bonvamó, from the verb
● 587 nyamola). The husband had the right to use this means immediately, without having first tried the étaka. But such action was not approved of and was undertaken only if the woman's family were themselves exasperated by the endless suits and the continual shame that their unworthy daughter caused them.

[721] The reduction of a woman to slavery usually caused a war, for her clan would not put up with such an insult. In some instances they did not seek revenge, however, either out of fear, because they did not feel in a position to resist, or because they recognized that the husband had good reasons for what he did. [384]

The woman's relatives could subsequently buy her back. (1)

[181]

> 1. If the Nkundó sold an Elinga woman into slavery, her people never troubled them with a war. For they did not know how to attack, were not good at marching, were strangers to the forest, and were inferior in military valor. Therefore they were satisfied with buying back their kinswoman.

In some instances, not wanting to be exposed to further palavers or further shame caused by their daughter's continued misconduct after having bought her back, they left her to her fate. Their love for their child and their desire to preserve their honor and good reputation were in conflict, and which of the two sentiments triumphed depended on circumstances of men and things. In such a situation, as with respect to theft and other habits that brought dishonor, it was not rare (nor is it even today) to find that the desire to preserve honor triumphed over affection or financial interests.

[584] Before reducing a wife to slavery, even more than before confining her to the etáka, a man was required to communicate his intentions to the ndonga. Otherwise, the latter would declare war

586[1] on his own authority, for the offense was considered very serious.
584 We can assume that the reason for this rule was to allow time for
[567] the woman's family to intervene and keep their daughter from becoming a slave by refunding the bride price paid for her.

c) In exceptional instances an exasperated husband resorted to the immolation of his wife when someone died. People cite the case of Bengóngó of Bongilá (Besombó, Bombwanja), who had his wife, Litúli of Bontole, decapitated at the ikwel at the death of his father, Bengóngó byá Yese.

If the woman had children old enough to intervene on her behalf, her husband could be prevented from carrying out his violent intentions. The proverb says, Mbómi ntáwká, "a mother [595] does not perish." The husband also abstained if the woman had [595] a co-wife (ebúa) who was her sister or other close relative -- either out of a feeling of shame, [385] or out of fear of undesirable repercussions. Sometimes, when a husband was caught between his wish to use the etúka and his shame or his fear of the ebúa, he hid [601] the wife who was confined by this fork. Preferably, he asked a brother-in-law to give her hospitality. In that way he got around the difficulty to a great extent, because through the law of exogamy such an arrangement placed the wife in another village, sometimes a considerable distance away. This practice was called isángyá tómba walí isángyá.

Instead of resorting to the procedures listed, a husband could 586[2] also place his wife in the hands of the ndonga. However, it was a 584 very unusual thing to do. The natives maintain that such action was due to a lack of affection for the wife, together with the husband's certainty that he could recover his valuables -- either because he was assured that his father-in-law was well disposed toward him (and would reimburse him or provide a replacement), or because he knew he could use the ikúkelo.

As we have said, direct repudiation was extremely rare. Here we are not speaking of repudiation caused by a wife's incorrigible misconduct -- which we have just discussed -- but of repudiation against the wife's wishes. If it did occur the husband was expected to hand her over to the ndonga, and the latter, seeing

member. In the case of common use or of an exceptionally good yield (large game, a rich haul of fish, large yield from a particular cultivation of common property, such as palm beer), these are divided by the clan leader and their respective shares allotted to all members.

Personal property consists of the hut and the tools of the man, the furniture of the woman, and the domestic animals. These are movable and can also go out of the clan through inheritance. Should they leave their husbands, married women may taken with them whatever they have received or inherited personally from their wise.

In contrast to the economic property of the clan, there is the dotal or capital property, the marriage settlements, which do not have economic, but only legal value. They represent the rights over people. In the first place we find those persons who themselves are the source of rights: the marriageable girls (bibunanyi) of the clan /A/ and the substitutes for women married into the clan /A/—that is, the women who are married into the allied clan /B/ with the acquired bride price (nkita). /Ed. Clan A pays bride price for a woman from clan B, the allied clan. Then clan B uses this acquired bride price to obtain another woman in marriage, a "substitute." This substitute is nkita to the original woman./ In addition, there are the slaves who can replace a caput. In the second place, there are the titles which represent a caput: the /153/ so-called dotal securities (baumba). These dotal securities or titles are kept by the clan leader and, with the knowledge of his immediate successor, hidden somewhere in the ground. With the approval of the clan council, he may also lend them out. These dotal possessions or rights are also common property of the clan and are used to procure a wife for the clan members, each in his turn.

The common ownership of the economic property makes possible the difficult sharing of woods and river, prevents the cutting up of the property, hinders the impoverishment and the proletarization of the poor, and insures the livelihood of all of the clan members. This common ownership has nothing more to do with communism than the common ownership of property in our nuclear families.

The dotal or capital property, the bride price titles, which have perhaps aroused the most indignant and lofty compassion of our civilized world, have less to do with buying and selling the wife then our own dowry and class system. They are permanent legal titles of the contract which is made between the clans of the couple on the occasion of the marriage. Our individualistic liberalism and mercantilism have regarded these legal securities only through economic spectacles and

595 wife was called Lonkata. This was, however, more a category, for there were sometimes four Lonkata in a harem. The rest were ordinary wives. Among the Ekonda, the first wife was called Nkumokolo, just like the Bomatsa. The second wife was called Ekila or Nkonde. The remaining wives were the ordinary wives of the harem.

595 The first wife, Bomatsa, always remained at home and never
484 left the harem. The second, Ekila or Nkonde, accompanied the polygynist everywhere; she was at his side on all his trips. The Bolumbu usually went completely alone to do errands in other villages.

595 These old customs of priority among the wives are now gradually beginning to disappear.

684 It was forbidden under severe penalty to have relations with the first, second, or third wife of the polygynist. The penalties were death, slavery, or a large fine.

This was their law concerning adultery, enforced with severe punishment.

595 The ordinary wives of the harem were less strictly guarded.
837 This often depended on the jealousy or indifference of the polygynist. Anyone who had relations with these wives had to pay a fine, or rather, a price of prostitution. Since the wives were almost all in the possession of the polygynists, there were naturally many men without a wife. These, then, often had relations with the ordinary wives of the polygynists. Also, the sons of the polygynist had relations with them; the polygynist himself sometimes even had relations with the ordinary wives of his neighbor. This was the bad consequence and the immorality of polygyny.

595 It is easy to understand that the ordinary wives of the polygynist,
586 having relations with others, often left their husband, or rather, their master in order to go to another. The ordinary wives constituted the largest number. It is because of this that one now finds many women who have had three or four, sometimes even seven, different husbands in succession. Among some tribes, [534] the Ekonda among them, they were stricter; a wife who had already left her husband or master two or more times was considered to have little worth.

●567 The female slaves who were taken in war were given by the
595 polygynist to his male slaves as wives. They could also be installed in the harem among the ordinary wives. Their children could have the same rights as the other children of the polygynist

567 439 562 Everywhere there were also abducted women and female slaves; these were simply sold. Furthermore women were bought and sold with women [as payment]. Also women who were inherited and no longer in the hands of their family were sold by their second, third, or other subsequent husband. In all of these cases, the family no longer came into consideration for the bride price. One would have to stretch the point in order to consider the sums paid in these cases as a bride price, and consequently as a native custom which one must respect.

562 439 Or one should have to assume that such a native woman remains a "bride" for her whole lifetime. It will be said that the woman consented to her sale by one man to the other.

[539] Often this was indeed the case, but not always by any means, for children and slaves were also sold. Even the consent of the woman did not prevent it from being a sale; her consent was rather an extra transaction that simplified the sale of a human article of trade. It still remains woman trade.

764 567 The Inheritance. Upon the death of a polygynist, the burial ceremony was conducted according to the class and rank of the deceased. One or two or several [539] slaves were killed and buried with the polygynist in the same grave. Sometimes the arms and legs of those male and female slaves were broken, and then they were buried alive in the same grave with the body.

When these slaves still had family, it might happen that the family members, having learned of the unfortunate lot of their relative, would hasten from faraway districts to buy him or her free if it was not yet too late. Several Negroes have told us of those heartbreaking scenes at which they were present as children. The mourning and the lamenting over the dead lasted from a week to a month.

[765]

768 428 587 The eldest son immediately succeeded his father in position and immediately took one of the wives of his father.

The other sons divided among them the lances and knives of their father.

If the deceased had left no son, or if he was still too young, the oldest brother succeeded the deceased. All of the wives had to remain in their own home, except the wife who was immediately taken by the eldest son. They were obliged to await the day of the distribution. This day was put off for from one to four months.

436 1. Benkata: this was thin iron or copper wire rolled into small rings; the thickness of the wire was about 3 millimeters; the length, 20 to 25 centimeters.

2. Bingetele: iron or copper bars about 8 millimeters thick and 15 centimeters long; these are still in use in Bikoro.

436 3. Bekata: copper wire; thickness about 7 or 8 millimeters, and
301 1 meter or 1.50 meters long; spiral shaped; the women wore these rolled around their legs as copper leggings.

[543] 4. Bakonga: copper rings which served as arm bands and foot bands and also as collars. The size differed for small or large persons; the weight is from one half kilo to 5 kilos.

436 5. Mitako: copper wire about 4 millimeters thick and 25 centimeters long, usually bent like a hairpin. The mitako served as a uniform currency, from which the other values and prices were reckoned, like the franc with us. The value of the mitako was formerly reckoned at five centimes.

583 Formerly the bride price, which was paid for a wife in al-
435 most all of Equatorial Africa, was from 5 to 20 bakonga. (The value of the bakonga differed greatly according to the weight. The average value, however, is estimated at 2.50 francs.) This payment was further supplemented with slaves or wives. This manner of payment and the bride price still exist in the districts where the natives have not yet, or practically not, come in contact with Europeans. Also,
[567] it was sometimes paid with only slaves or women. The price for one female slave was relatively much less than for another woman.

178 Through the occupation of the Congo by Europeans, the
583 family life of the natives has necessarily undergone great changes, and their customs and habits as well.

In the first place the natives have found themselves deprived of their wives by the sentinels of the Independent Congo State.
[661] These black sentinels, appointed in the villages by the State to supervise the reaping of caoutchouc, assumed an unlimited power. They took as many wives of the natives as they chose and did not pay for a single one.

Next many black soldiers, servant boys, and workmen of the Europeans also took wives everywhere in the beginning, without bothering about the native customs, that is, without paying for those wives; and this often happened under the protective power of their Whites.

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624 thus, *Nsoso* is a very prominent figure. Still arrayed as previously described, she sits outside the *soso* near the road on the special stool of the *nkumu*. Nobody may pass her with food, a humane law, considering that she must spend the day fasting. If anyone attempts to do so she catches the unlucky individual, helps herself to as much of his food as she wants, the victim meanwhile begging her to be merciful and leave him a small portion, and the booty is taken into the *ipasa*. During this sentinel duty *Nsoso* must still keep the parrot's feather in her mouth and maintain silence, so, in case she catches an unsuspecting bearer of food, the remonstrance and argument are all one-sided.[1] After the first day *Nsoso* no longer sits outside the *soso* but goes from place to place in the village, choosing spots where people may least expect her, hoping thus to reap a bigger harvest for her pains. This is kept up for eight days, which comprise two Tumba 'weeks' of three days' work and one of rest. The rest-day is appropriately named *boisa bo nsoso* after the duty of *Nsoso* of sitting doing nothing day by day. The eight days of this ceremony over, *Nsoso* lays aside her gourd and plantain stalk, which are placed at the foot of the first central supporting post [302] of the *ekunga* on entering. She is given a fresh coating of chalk and three coloured stripes are drawn the length of her back and down her arms. She still remains close to the *nkumu*.

● [507] Various personalities are connected with the *soso* of an *nkumu*. The *Bansi* is a male slave, clothed in a skin beech cloth, whose duty it is to receive callers at the *ipasa* before admitting them to the presence of the *nkumu*.

624 595 *Mpanga* is the name taken by the wife first married by the *nkumu*. From henceforth she no longer accompanies her husband, and their cohabitation ceases unless the *nkumu* is willing to pay her each time the sum of one hundred rods. But the *nkumu* is obliged to eat all food she cooks for him even though they have a quarrel. *Mpanga* does not honour her husband with the special greeting accorded to *nkumu*, but greets her husband and all other *nkumu* as she would ordinary people.[2] The second wife of an *nkumu* must assume the name of *Iyombo Angonda*, but no importance attaches to her position.

624 596 Among the Tumba generally, apart from the Bonginda, a woman is chosen from the *mokondo* to bear the title *Bokombo Itina i Ekopo* (*Bokombo*, the 'raison d'être' of the *ekopo*). She is, it would seem, a symbolical figure, a reminder that the *ekopo* owes its existence to the *mokondo* of which this woman becomes the titular head. While the *nkumu* is still in seclusion the chosen woman is taken to the open space between the *ipasa* and the row of sons' houses, known as the *nanda*. Here, in the presence of the assembled crowd she is praised by being addressed, *'Bokombo Itina, bototi!'* and the crowd exclaims, *'Bwa!'*[3] Strips of leopard skin, about eighteen

[845] [1] It is interesting to note that there are some exceptions to those who may be caught and robbed by *Nsoso* during her eight days of watching. No members of the *mokondo* may be thus taxed, twins and their parents are exempt, and also all children born to the *nkumu* before he attains office, these being termed *mumvi*.

[554 595] [2] Besides *Mpanga*, a mother of twins is also exempt from according *nkumu* special salutations, and among some groups the father of twins is also exempt.

[3] This ceremony gives husbands of any village, whether they are members of the *mokondo* or not, the opportunity to single out a favourite wife for special honours, for at this time any woman may be given the name of *Bokombo*, though not with the significant complement of *Itina i Ekopo*. The ceremony is similar, is performed at the *nanda*, but besides receiving the strips of leopard skin, she must be dressed of all her clothing, a new *lombo* and *nyanga* are then placed round her, and the strips of skin then attached to the new belt.

This funeral drumming is kept up for a long time, off and on for days, and is very stirring in its rhythm. While it is going on, the elders congregate in an *ekunga*. They fast and have nothing to do with their wives during this time. The *okoto* is mourning, and the *mokwala* may be likewise mourning, but for the others it is a time of rejoicing, and also of the relaxing of moral restraints. It is an occasion for dancing by both Batwa and 'freemen', the former regarding this as a time for special rejoicing, for the *nkumu* was their master and now he is dead they are no longer under restraint. They are free to take any of their master's goods and even to snatch blankets off the corpse. Men and women do not dance together; the women, taking some of their husbands' weapons, go off in one direction, and the men, arrayed in finery, dance at the other end of the village.

While the *nkumu* is still unburied and the drumming is going on, the *mokwala* look for a successor among the *okoto*. Often this man will, as we have seen, have already been designated. The *mokwala*, Batwa, and others in the village make up a party, and attired in war finery go off with their weapons as though after a man they wished to kill. As they go they sing:

Nkumbe w'ongôlo olombo
W'olole wo ako!
Hawk, thou hast destroyed the nest,
Where art thou going to sleep?

Before catching the real successor they catch one or another in fun, singing this song. The man of course refuses to be *nkumu*, and the point of the song is that because of his refusal the *okoto* no longer fulfils its function of supplying the *mokwala* with *nkumu* and therefore ceases to be of any use to them. If this man by refusing thus destroys the family nest, where will they sleep?

Finally, after this fun, the real successor is caught, his face daubed with black, and the group sing:

Bolo kow-ee, kwele okolo.
The cunning animal is hiding, reveal the tortoise.

Thus the new *nkumu*, like a cunning animal, is hiding, but when discovered, like the tortoise, he will not try to run away. The whole group conducts the new *nkumu* to the *ejumo* and sits all night guarding him. Earlier on the day of the actual interment of the dead *nkumu*, the new one is installed with ceremonies as already described.

On the day the *nkumu* dies his people scatter to other villages to look for slaves for the executions on the day of the burial. Slave-owners or husbands of unwanted wives ask quietly how much money there is for the man or woman, accept the agreed amount, and tell the buyers to go quietly and catch the slave or wife before anything is suspected and an escape is made. In this connexion we may note two classes of wives, *bapida* and *ibato*. A third class, *bumba*, acquired by the payment of a very small bride price, was not nearly so common formerly as at present and may be passed by. A *bapida* was a slave wife acquired by capture in war or stolen. If loved by her husband she will take her place practically on an equality with the members of the village, but she may be killed, for she is her husband's possession, 'his money' is the native expression. An *ibato* is a wife for whom a very high bride price has been paid, obliging her family to give wives to the other family in perpetuity, supplying

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a successor to replace a deceased woman, and thus maintaining the balance between the two families. Such wives were seldom killed, for they had relatives who cared for them and would object, and who had the power to do so by refusing to fulfil their obligations and by retaining the bride price already received. The group of men and women gathered together for execution thus comprised males and *bopika* women from the 'free' group (*boato*, as applied to all men and women not Batwa), and Batwa men and women whose owners had consented to their death. It sometimes happened that a man, seeing a woman among this group who took his fancy, might obtain her by paying for her in money or substituting one of his own slaves.

In some cases the executioner, *bomembe*, was chosen from among the family of the dead *nkumu*, in others he was selected from among the whole group of people over which the *nkumu* held sway. The man having been chosen, the knife is brought out of the house where it has been kept by some elder. This, a blade some sixteen inches in length, two-edged, decorated by alternating longitudinal lines of polished and blackened steel and inserted in a wooden handle, is sharpened on one edge, carefully wrapped in a plantain leaf, and laid away for use on the following day.

At dawn the prisoners are taken to the water and washed to clean them, inland towns accomplishing this purpose by dragging them up and down the village in the dew-drenched grass tied by a liana. The prisoners then are arranged in a V shape, the apex nearest the spot where the *nkumu*'s body is sitting in state. Low seats are made by resting a stick in the forks of two perpendicular ones, and this cross bar is straddled by the victim. His hands are tied behind his back and his head tied to a sapling securely fixed at one end in the ground, the other bent down sufficiently to allow for tying the head with considerable tension on the rope. When all is thus arranged an expert drummer begins to pound out a rhythmic beat, and the ceremony of handing over the knife takes place.

The executioner of the day is dressed in finery but no camwood powder is evident, for it is a time of mourning and not of rejoicing. He wears a hat with many feathers, a vine encircles his waist, and bracelets of the same his arms. Then the man who last occupied the position of executioner comes forward. An elder has already brought the knife wrapped in its leaf and also a heap of ash on a leaf, both of which are placed on the ground. The old executioner picks up the knife while the new one faces him. The former demonstrates with gestures how he used to go about his work, the motions, the attitudes, the fine arts of the task. Even though the executioner of the day may have had previous experience, this part of the ceremony must be gone through. Then, holding the knife aloft, the instructor raises his right leg at right angles to his body, bends it at the knee so that the shin hangs perpendicularly, and the new executioner passes underneath it, returning the same way. He now faces the old executioner, who lays the knife in his own hands, arms outstretched and palms open, the handle resting in his right palm, the blade in his left. The new man, facing his instructor, places his outstretched and open palms on the shoulders of the other, draws his hands down his arms, finally coming to the knife, which, because of its position is thus received, handle in the left hand, blade in the right. Releasing his right-hand grasp of the blade, he stoops, sprinkles the blade with some of the ash, then rubs his right hand in the dirt to remove all slippery sweat. Then still

crypt would then be barred by mats in order to leave it as a hollow chamber, and the hole leading down to it filled in with earth.

For a month or two after the burial the festivities and orgies continued. Women would be hanged to create some diversion, but those hanged were not eaten. Decapitations would continue. According to the informants only slaves brought in from a distance would have to be tied to prevent their escape. The slave members of the household of the dead *nkumu* would await their turn stoically, content to die that they might accompany their master in his journey to the land of spirits. This may be true but scarcely seems possible. Still another diversion in the funeral orgies was killing in the manner known as *esumbu*. If some man who had a slave did not wish him to be hanged or beheaded, he might give him for this other method. As the weeks slipped by, such a one, his life having apparently been spared, would suppose that all was safe and that there was little chance of his being taken, and, thus emboldened, would, instead of keeping at a safe distance, join the crowd to watch a beheading. His death would be prearranged. At the moment of beheading a victim, someone would drive a spear into the unsuspecting man, the whole crowd then using spears and knives to stab and slash until he fell. Some might be tortured to death by being buried up to the neck and left thus exposed to the hot sun without food or water until death intervened, but this was not a common practice at such funerals.

The termination of the dead *nkumu*'s affairs took place when the division of the inheritance was made, a long and complicated process.

Such were the old days before European penetration. The advent of the white man half a century ago was the beginning of the end. The ceremonies had to be given up, though reluctantly. Occasionally now goats are beheaded in place of human victims, and many of the younger generation find that, even so, the sight is more than they can endure, and they seek refuge elsewhere. *Nkumu* are not anxious for the honours. They find little or no respect paid to them by the government officials and this is a distinct obstacle to their obtaining honour from their own people. When the *nkumu* resident in the village adjacent to the mission station died, one of the Natives was asked who would be next. The reply was that probably no one would appear as a successor. Asked why, he answered, 'There are too many trousers.' He meant that too many were adopting the ways of the white man to make the inauguration of another *nkumu* a success. In his one useful function, that of judge, the paramount chief now takes his place, cases tried must be recorded by a clerk of the court, and fines paid into the treasury of the chieftaincy. With such a state of affairs the old ways drop into desuetude, and the younger generation grow up knowing less of the ways of their fathers as the years pass.